

THE  
**RECANTATION**  
 OF  
**Cornelius O Donnel,**

**PRIOR of TRIM,**

As it was by him solemnly deliver'd in the  
*Church of Trim* (Renouncing the Errors of  
 the **ROMAN CHURCH**) upon *Sunday*  
*Aug. 14.* together with the Motives  
 inducing him thereunto.

*Licensed August 19. 1664.*

God People, considering my now  
 appearing here this day in a way  
 differing from my Profession for-  
 merly in the *Romish Church*, it  
 becomes necessary for Publick Satisfaction that  
 something be declared as to the Manner, Rea-  
 sons and Grounds of it, which I chose to be  
 done amongst you here at *Trim*, rather than

Elsewhere; This being the very Place unto which (by a Power Forreign to you, and by me now disclaimed) I have been appointed Prior) (that being amongst those with whom I once was) a dignity of Esteem, the *Prior of Trim* reputed amongst the most Eminent of that kind in this Kingdome. This gives you the repute then had of me among those whom I at that time conversed with: So therein you see what my former Profession was, and way of life, being one in Communion with the Church of *Rome*, and a *Regular* of the *Dominican* Order of Friars; in which way I continued about twenty years, and in Order hereunto my Education hath been most in Forreign Parts, as at *Rome*, *Naples*, &c. being but lately return'd to this my Native Country of *Ireland*, and here received with those respects, and that Trust already mention'd.

Ambition of greatness is not therefore (you see) the Motive to this Change; for I cannot now propose to my self great things rationally, as I had no reason to deny my self any hopes of rising yet higher then I have done, had I gone on and continued in that Course wherein I was formerly; nor is Liberty, and a being out of the Narrow Rules of a Regular Order any inducement to me in this, for I know not  
where

where liberty even to licentiousness is to be had more then in the way of my Conversation formerly ; not that I say 'tis so there professedly and by Publique Allowance, yet to be so in effect and generally, and with much connivance and impunity also is what cannot be denyed ; of which I could wish heartily that others also in that course would consider seriously and seasonably ; nor that, nor any thing in that kind was a Persuasive to me in this, but what only is grounded on conscience and care of Salvation, to which all sinister ends of Ambition or Liberty, or any thing else of that nature must give place.

Under these thoughts of this Change, I have long laboured with some conflicts and trouble of mind, and sometime of hazard to my Person also : for during my time at *Naples*, having inconsiderately expressed my self in some things whereby jealousies were raised of me, which had like to have brought me into the Inquisition, had I not recollected my self by a seasonable contraction made of what had so passed me ; and herein I acknowledge my weakness in not rather standing it out then and in After trials ; for thereby, and by temptations after of quiet and advantage, I did for a time silence conscience, and was content to

run on as formerly, and so resolved I came to this my native Soyl, and here accordingly accepted of that preferment before mentioned then offered and conferr'd upon me. But here it pleased God to look on me in his mercy again, not so leaving me to my self, and having brought me hither to a place of more liberty for declaring my self so, as I could not do before, and finding here also means for my fuller information in the truth, then in my former condition, I have therefore through that grace of God which hath opened that way so for me, now laid hold on this happy opportunity for it, and do rejoyce that I may with this freedom and safety declare my self in all these in this place, and at this time before you.

But in the very entrance on this I find my self the Publick Discourse of all; all mouthes open against me, some maliciously, others over-credulously to my great scandal and discouragement, and aspersed with scandalous surmizes, such as untill this occasion were never known. But if I so suffer, I know I am not alone in it, and I know him who assures me of a blessing, while others so curse. *Blessed are ye, saith Christ, when all men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil of you falsely for my sake, Math. 5. verse 11.* But whatever men say of me, or whatever I have been, I shall by the Grace of God approve my self in my conversation so as not to be a scandall to the Truth now professed by me; nor shall I; I hope be a reproach to the Church which I desire now to be received into, thereby hoping in time to stop the mouths of Traducers to their own shame.

And now (Good People) having given you some Accompt:

compt of my self as to my life, I beg your further patience, while I add something of the Moives to this Change; some only I offer of many, that I be not too tedious to you.

1. One was the consideration of that (as I conceived, unlimited Pow'r assumed and practised by the Pope for dispensing with incestuous Marriages in the greatest nearness of blood, so as by such a dispensation purchased with money an Uncle might be allowed to marry his Niece, if not a Brother his Sister. This I know to be contrary to Gods Law in expresse terms, and how any mortall man or creature could dispence with the D.vine Law of the supreme God I could not understand; for to dispence with a Law is (we know) an Act of Prerogative, such as is exercised by a Superior over an Inferiour, and how that supremacy which the Pope challenged on Earth should rise so much higher, was I profess above me to conceive, and what I thought not fit nor safe to submit my reason and faith unto.

2. I was further told, and must have believed as a necessary Article of Faith, that in consecrating the Host in the holy Eucharist, and after the prolation of these words of Consecration, *Hec est enim Corpus meum*, the nature of Bread and Wine thence further ceased to be, and that thereby a real transubstantiation is made of the natural Body and Blood of Christ as he was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary his Mother, and as he was after offered on the Cross, and the least Particle, even to *minimum naturale* of that Bread hath Christ wholly and entirely in it, and that wheresoever consecrated, although in Millions of places at once, and at the greatest distances; and that the Bread alone without the Cup is sufficient and comprehensive of both, and that Bread alone is to be administered to the People exclusively to their taking of the Cup, and the Host so consecrated is to be adored of all, even as Christ himself, and with the same divine and supreme Worship commonly termed *Sacra*. This is what I then thought of that Sacrament, wherein I found many things sticking.

1. For how could those words, *hoc est corpus meum*, although very plain for a Real Presence, reach yet to a Corporall Presence, especially considered as when those words were pronounced by Christ himself in the first Institution; for was that Bread and Wine at that very time Christs very Body and Blood naturally? Did heh do himself in his own hands? and did he himself eat himself? was he himself then crucified before he was crucified? or was it not then a signe only of what was to be done to him after when he should be crucified; as it is now to us of his having been already crucified?

2. And if that be so, and not such change be made as is suggested, but that the consecrated Bread and Wine are Bread and Wine still, and in the former nature after Consecration; what then do we after Consecration in adoring that for Christ himself, and as himself, which is not himself, only Sacramentally? This could not be (as I conceived, without danger, at least of Idolatry, in adoring a Creature for God.

3. I saw not how Christ having appointed Bread and Wine both, and not one alone to be delivered to all, and that he hath said particularly of the Cup, *Drink ye all of this*, which he did not say of the Bread, as foreseeing some Injury would be offered to that part of his blessed Institution above the other, in taking this the Cup away, and denying it to some, the Laity while the other the Bread, and administered to all; I saw not (I say) how that could consist with that sacred Institution of Christ our Lord, whose actions in that are to be for our Imitation, as is his command for our obedience.

4. I could not understand how Christs Body being a naturall Body as ours, and in all things like ours (present glory excepted) and sh<sup>ould</sup> yet be infinitely multiplied, and in several infinite places at once, contrary to the nature of a true Body such as Christ is; How can that multiplication of Bodies consist with one Body only? nor did what I heard in that of Gods Omnip tency satisfy; for where is it found and seen, that God would do so. And Miracles are not to be multiplied



multiplied unnecessarily, or according to our fancies, besides what is further to be said in it.

5 That which was imposed on our Faith concerning Purgatory was a scruple also to me, that being a place said to be for Soules after death, there to be purged from Sins by fire and sufferings, so grievous as that all the sufferings in this life is said to be nothing in comparison; Purgatory fire being no way esteemed short even of Hell it selfe, both Torments only differing in duration, Hell Torments being eternall, the other but Temporary.

1 But that Death should be a time for reforming, which is the worke of this life only, is what is contrary to Scripture.

2 That the state of the Soules of those who are for Heaven (for such only are said to be for Purgatory) others, having Hell for their Place, that I say such Soules which after this life are for Blisse and Peace should be for Torments unspeakable, is what is also contrary to Scripture *Revel. 14. 13.* Where Saint *John* saith, [*I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write; Blessed are the Righteous which dye in the Lord from hence forth; yea saith the Spirit, that they rest from their Labours and their works doe follow them*] so saith the Spirit of God whom I am to believe rather then any other Spirit that tells me the contrary.

3 Nor doe I finde in Scripture such a place as that of Purgatory is said to be.

4 Nor is that Great virtue of purging from Sin given to any fire, or any other thing, that being peculiar only to the Blood of Christ, which, &c which only, purgeth us from all Sin.

5 And all considered I had just cause to suspect that all that of Purgatory was but a corrupt designe; First, for advantage, which was infinite, by purchasing on that ground Indulgences and Masses, and other the like. Secondly, that it might be a politique designe for making up the Popes greatness, both in giving him a Supremacy of Power in Purgatory as on Earth, and further by fastning all men and their

Interests unto him, as one in whose power is there after peace by a speedy deliverance out of those scorching flames and Torments unspeakable.

I will not trouble you with more of this kind at present, having I doubt gone too farre already, only know that this and much more sticking with me, I could not be so wanting to my self as not to seek Peace and Salvation where I might find it, and not being satisfied of having it where till now I had in vain expected it.

And now Right Reverend Father in God my Lord Bishop of Meath, in whose hands I thus put my self being within your Diocess, and Charge, I humbly desire that you would accept of this my humble acknowledgement of former Errors which I now renounce, and here lay down at your feet what before I esteemed mine Honour, this Part of my Priority of Trim, with which I cast off at once all of that kind, and kneeling, I humbly beg to be received to Communion with you, and that I may have your Blessing and Prayers to God for me, that he would confer on you his Grace to walk before him for the future any way he may see fit to direct me.

All which is from my self is freely and cordially declared under mine own hand acknowledged, and thus presented to your Lordship.

CORNELIUS O'DONNELL

Memorandum, That in the 14th of August 1664 being the 10th day, the above Declaration signed by Cornelius O'Donnell late Prior of Trim in the County of Meath was by himself openly read in St. Peter's Church at Trim in a full Congregation after Publick Prayers and Sermon, and was after by himself delivered into the hand of the Lord Bishop of Meath, and that he the said Cornelius O'Donnell having been then presented to the Bishop by Dr. Ambrose Jones, Arch-Deacon of Meath, he was thereupon publicly received with a solemn Benediction.

LONDON Printed by Richard H. [unclear] lying in Church-lane over against St. Dunstons Church.